



What can health professionals contribute to the challenge of sustainability?

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Abstract:

Just as doctors have led aspects of social change in the past, health professionals today must contribute to and lead actions on sustainability. Exponential growth and unsustainability can be observed in the global population, energy use, money supply and greenhouse gas emissions. As with all unsustainable systems, they will become sustainable, but the timing and manner are undecided and carry profound health threats. We are trapped using outmoded forms of thinking and by our cognitive dissonance as we consider these threats in the light of our own lifestyles. The aim should be a transition that will lessen inequalities, combat problems such as obesity, depression and addictive behaviours, and improve well-being. The challenge is similar to other major public health issues in that the problem needs to be identified, evidence gathered, theories developed, alliances built, policies formulated and actions taken. This paper outlines how this can be done but suggests that the response needed will be unprecedented, and calls for action on what is known and debate about what is uncertain.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2009.09.008>

Resource Description

Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change;
 surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional, Policymaker

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Diabetes/Obesity, Mental Health/Stress

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Mood Disorder

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Mitigation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Research Article

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified